

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed March 1, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-6, 8-12, and 14-16 as obvious in light of United States Patent No. 4,567,600 to Massey et al. The Examiner also rejected claims 2, 7, and 13 as being obvious having regard to United States Patent No. 4,567,600 to Massey et al. in view of United States Patent No. 6,219,794 to Soutar et al.

In response applicant has amended claims 1, 3, 9, and 15 to patentably distinguish the present invention over the Massey reference. Specifically, the limitation of downloading an encrypt and decrypt engine to a computer over a computer network has now been added to each of claims 1, 3, 9 and 15. Such limitation is supported by the specification as filed on page 8, lines 5 and 6, and is not taught nor suggested by the Massey reference taken alone or in combination with the other prior art of record.

In the present invention, the process of downloading digital information over a computer network provides non-obvious utility. For example, by downloading the encrypt and decrypt engine to the computer, such engine can be modified each time a new secure transmission is executed. This allows for variations in components such as the key length and the encryption algorithm. Varying such components significantly increase the difficulty of breaking the encryption.

In addition, by downloading the encrypt and decrypt engine, it is possible to include authentication means (eg, certificates and hash functions) to assure that such engine is used only by authorized parties and has not been tampered with. One of the security weaknesses in the methods taught by Massey is that the engine used by the message originator may be altered such that it appears to be fully functional to the user while in actuality, it has been subverted to use an encryption key known to an undesirable third party. By downloading the engine, as specified in the amended claims, it is possible to assure that a "fresh copy" of the engine is used for each transmission.

Claim 2 is dependent on amended claim 1. Claims 4-8 are dependent on amended claim 3. Claims 10-14 are dependent on amended claim 9. Claim 16 is dependent on amended claim 15. Applicant submits that the dependant claims are patentable for at least the reason that they depend from claims which patentably distinguish over the prior art.

Examiner is respectfully requested to now pass this application to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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